Agricultural Export

751. DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI :
SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are providing any financial assistance to the State Governments to boost the export of agricultural produce;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether only 400 crore rupees have been spent out of the plan outlay of Rupees 1000 crores to improve the agricultural export;

(d) if so, the reasons and justification thereof; and

(e) the details of steps/action plan initiated by the Government to boost the export of agricultural produce?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) No, Sir. Government does not provide any financial assistance to State govts. specifically to boost export of agricultural produce.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d). There is no separate allocation to improve agricultural export, the thrust however is to achieve higher levels of production.

(e) To boost the export of agricultural produce Government has taken a number of steps viz. simplification of inspection procedures, removal of quantity restrictions on some items, concessonal credit, product development to meet international standards, extension of benefits under the scheme of 100% export oriented units/export processing zones to agricultural sector, air freight subsidy on selected floricultural/ horticulrural/fresh vegetables to specified destinations, provision of cold storage at airports, financial assistance to exporters under various schemes, participation in international trade fairs, arranging buyers-sellers meetings, organising market development compaigns, improving packaging and quality certification. The National Horticulture Board provides assistance for marketing, handling, processing and infrastructural facilities for domestic and export markets.

Selling of Adopted Children

752. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of India asked to State Government of Orissa for a report on the alleged involvement of Basundhara, a voluntary organisation in selling of children in the name of adoption;

(b) if so, the details of the report submitted by the State Government in this regard; and

(c) the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government of India in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) to (c). This Ministry has received a number of complaints and allegations from senior citizens of Cuttack as well as MLAs of Orissa Government stating that the organisation Basundhara is involved in malafide activities which inter-alia relate to selling of children in name of adoption. The State Commission for Women had also asked for investigation of the activities of placement agencies in Orissa including that of Basundhara. The Government has contacted the appropriate authorities under the Government of India to conduct an investigation of the activities of this organisation and submit a report which is awaited. The State Government has not been asked to submit a report. However they have been informed of the action taken by this Ministry.

Late Arrival of Monsoon

753. SHRI HARIN PATHAK : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the late monsoon has adversely affected the Kharif crop particularly the staple crops like Bajra, Jowar and pulses such as Urad and Moong;

(b) if so, the extent thereof;

(c) whether due to dry spell the crop has also been affected in the Western Maharashtra particularly in Nasik, Ahmednagar and Pune districts in Aurangabad; and

(d) if so, the extent thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) and (d). Due to dry spells, the growth and development of crop was affected to some extent initially but the crops recovered later on by favourable weather conditions. The production is likely to be better than last Kharif season.

[Translation]

Inter State Council

754. SHRI N.J. RATHWA :
SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV :
SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN :
SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA :
SHRI D.P. YADAV :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the sittings of Inter-State Council held so far and the suggestions made thereof;